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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MADERA

**THIRTY-FIRST GENERAL ORDER RE: MADERA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC
& THE JUNE 15, 2021 REOPENING OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a proclamation that a state of emergency existed in California as a result of the threat and continuing spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This was followed by the governor’s first issued ‘shelter in place’ order, which went into effect on March 19, 2020.

Since these early efforts to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep the public informed, California experienced numerous mitigation efforts at the state level, including Governor Newsom’s four-tier blueprint for reopening the economy and a regional stay-at-home order that was lifted in January 2021.

With the lifting of the regional stay-at-home order, Madera County returned to the provisions of the four-tier blueprint for reopening the economy and has since improved to the third least restrictive ‘orange tier.’

In recent months, the transmission of COVID-19 has drastically decreased in both the State of California and Madera County.

Courthouses were considered places of high risk during the pandemic; however, case rates and positivity rates are now more optimal in Madera County.

1 With the recent June 15, 2021 ‘Reopening of California,’ the Madera County Superior
2 Court, pursuant to guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the Madera
3 County Public Health Department, will continue to adhere to certain preventative measures that
4 mitigate the risk of COVID transmission, including: mandatory use of masks/face coverings,
5 symptom screening upon entry, facility disinfection and fostering an environment that encourages
6 hand washing/sanitizing.

7 **Accordingly, I hereby issue the following general orders, with the referenced effective**
8 **dates:**

9 **Effective June 8, 2021, and continuing until further notice (item 1 below):**

- 10 1. The 2021 Emergency Bail Schedule was revoked as of June 8, 2021. The 2021 Felony
11 Bail Schedule (including selected misdemeanors), signed by Presiding Judge Ernest
LiCalsi on January 4, 2021, is reinstated.

12 **Effective June 15, 2021, and continuing until further notice (items 2 – 10 below):**

- 13 2. Social Distancing: All persons entering the Madera County Superior Court will no longer
14 be required to adhere to the COVID-19 6-foot distancing requirement. This includes all
areas of the courthouse, including all courtrooms and jury assembly areas.
- 15 3. Masks/Face Coverings for Court Visitors & Jurors: All persons entering the Madera
16 County Superior Court to conduct business, attend proceedings and report for jury duty
will be required to wear a mask or face covering while inside the courthouse.
- 17 4. COVID-19 Symptom Screening: All persons entering the Madera County Superior Court
18 will be required to answer screening questions about the presence of symptoms related to
COVID-19.

19 The court requests that no one who is ill with symptoms of COVID-19 appear at the
20 courthouse.

21 Those who are ill, including attorneys, litigants and justice partners, should remain at home
22 or in a location away from the courthouse. If you have a matter on calendar, or if entry is
not granted based on responses to the health screening questions, you should contact the
23 court and advise that you will not be appearing due to illness or the potential exposure to
illness.

- 24 5. Court Calendars: Calendar times that were created to accommodate social distancing are
25 eliminated. All Departments will generally have one calendar each day (8:30 a.m.), with
26 exceptions for special set calendars (for example: 8:15 a.m. ex-parte hearings; 9:30 a.m.
trial and preliminary hearing calendars; 10:00 a.m. settlement conference calendars; 1:30
27 p.m. Behavioral Health Court calendars; and 1:30 p.m. arraignments, etc).

- 1 6. In-person appearances will be permitted in any civil, family law or family support
2 proceeding. At the choice of the parties, all such proceedings may be conducted remotely
3 by use of CourtCall or the Zoom video conference platform. For all non-confidential
4 proceedings, members of the public may also appear in-person or via Zoom.
- 5 7. Normal, daily criminal arraignments shall be by Zoom or any other method of video
6 conferencing approved by the court.
- 7 8. In-custody defendants will be transported to the courthouse from CDCR or the Madera
8 County Jail unless otherwise ordered by the court.
- 9 9. For criminal proceedings, members of the public may appear in-person or via Zoom.
- 10 10. The self-help office is open to the public and will continue in-person appointments. When
11 operationally feasible, the use of remote technology is authorized as an alternative to in-
12 person appointments.

13 **Effective from the 27th General Order and continuing until further notice (items 11&12**
14 **below):**

- 15 11. Notwithstanding Madera County Superior Court, Local Rule 2.4.6, all applications for ex
16 parte relief shall be submitted to the court before notice of hearing is provided to the
17 opposing party. A judicial officer will review the application and a judicial assistant will
18 notify the applicant if notice to the opposing party and a court appearance is required. If a
19 hearing date is ordered by the judicial officer, the person applying for ex parte relief must
20 notify the opposing party no later than 10:00 a.m. the court day before the hearing date
21 ordered, unless the judicial officer finds good cause to dispense with such notice.
- 22 12. All oral arguments in the appellate department may be conducted remotely via CourtCall
23 or the Zoom video conference platform.

24 **Effective from the 29th General Order and continuing until further notice (item 13 below):**

- 25 13. All mediation services and investigative interviews to be provided by Family Court
26 Services shall be conducted telephonically unless in-person mediation or interview is
27 specifically ordered by the court. The exception to this restriction shall be in-person child
28 interviews which will be conducted as required by statute, or as requested by the assigned
Child Custody Recommending Counselor. Pursuant to provisions of section 1851 (a)(1) of
the Probate Code, the court investigator may conduct conservatorship investigations as
required by sections 1850 and 1851 of the Probate Code by means of a video interview of
the conservatee, in lieu of visiting the conservatee. This order is necessary for the health
and safety of the investigator, the conservatee, the caregivers, and the public, and to
prevent harm to the conservatee.

Effective June 20, 2021, and continued as allowed by statute (item 14 below):

14. All criminal proceedings in which the time for commencement of trial, provided for in
Penal Code section 1382, has not been waived may be continued for good cause, as
determined by the judicial officer, and/or as authorized by any continuation order of the
Chief Justice.

Each judicial officer retains discretion to deviate from the foregoing orders upon a finding of good
cause.

DATED: June 18, 2021



Presiding Judge of the Superior Court

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